



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAY 12 2008

OFFICE OF WATER

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: The Release of the *FY 2009 National Water Program Guidance*

FROM:

Michael H. Shapiro
Deputy Assistant Administrator

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michael Shapiro".

TO:

Office Directors, Office of Water
Regional Water Division Directors; Regions 1-10
Great Waterbody Program Office Directors
Large Aquatic Ecosystem Subobjective Leads

The final *FY 2009 National Water Program Guidance*, which defines environmental and public health goals and program strategies for the National Water Program for FY 2009, is now available on the internet at: <http://www.epa.gov/ocfopage/npmguidance/index.htm>. Printed copies of the *Guidance* are available from the EPA Office of Water.

Priorities for the water program in FY 2009 are summarized in the Executive Summary and Introduction of the *Guidance*. These priorities are:

- Support Sustainable Water Infrastructure;
- Improve Water Security and Preparedness;
- Contribute to the President's Wetlands Goals;
- Improve Water Monitoring;
- Restore Water Quality on a Watershed Basis; and
- Improve Achievement of Drinking Water Standards.

For FY 2009, the *Guidance* includes a discussion of EPA regional water priorities in the Executive Summary and Introduction. In addition, a new section on Environmental Justice was added to discuss the nexus between program planning and the Environmental Justice Action Plan. We have also made important improvements and alignment to performance measures for FY 2009. Appendix C highlights key changes from FY 2008 to FY 2009 in the *Guidance*.

The Agency planning process provides for the development of draft EPA regional and national commitments for FY 2009, based on the targets for measures identified in this *Guidance*, by July 7th. I strongly encourage EPA regional offices to do their best to **develop commitments that meet or exceed targets** in the *Guidance* while reflecting the needs and priorities in each region. Final commitments will be negotiated in late summer and finalized by early October.

Once final commitments are in place, the National Water Program will monitor progress throughout FY 2009. The program evaluation “feedback loop” includes the following key elements:

- Reporting of progress toward environmental and public health goals and program commitments at the mid-year and at the end of the year, including identification of “best practices”;
- Continued efforts to share program perspectives among regional and headquarters (HQ) program managers through HQ visits to regional offices; and
- Cooperation with the other offices, such as the Office of Management and Budget, EPA Inspector General, Government Accountability Office, and National Academy of Sciences, to consider conclusions of evaluation studies of water programs and adopt recommended “best practices” where appropriate.

If we can continue to reinforce a strong annual planning process with an equally effective performance assessment effort, the National Water Program will be well prepared to continue its strong performance in the years ahead.

Thank you for the outstanding work you have done to continue progress toward cleaner and safer water for the citizens of the United States. I look forward to working with you as we continue with this important mission.

cc: Lyons Gray, Chief Financial Officer; Office of the Chief Financial Officer
Benjamin Grumbles; Assistant Administrator for Water